A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN,

AT

WINDSOR,

On *July* the 25th, 1708.

PSALM xxxvii. 38.

Keep Innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that ſhall bring a man Peace at the laſt.

In the latter Verſion in the Bible, *Verſe*, 37.

Mark the Perfect Man, and behold the Upright; for the end of that man is Peace.

By JOSEPH RAWSON, D.D.

Publiſhed by Her Majeſties Special Command.

LONDON:
Printed and Sold by *H. Hills*, in *Black-fryars*, near Water-ſide, For the Benefit of the Poor. 1708.

PSALM XXXVII. 38.

Keep Innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that ſhall bring a Man Peace at the laſt.

In the latter Verſion in the Bible, *Ver.* 37.

Mark the Perfect Man, and behold the Upright; for the end of that Man is Peace.

IT has been a conſtant Objection, that Senſual Men have made to Religion in all Ages, that all the Rewards, it puts Men in expectation of, are at a great diſtance, and in Reverſion only; but that Vice makes a preſent Payment to its Votaries, ſuch as it is, and obliges them with an immediate Gratification of their Appetites. But at the ſame time they prophanely alledge, that Providence has not ſufficiently guarded the Innocent and the Virtuous in this World. 'Tis no new Complaint, that 'all things come alike to all; that there 'is one Event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked; to 'the good, and to the Clean, and the Unclean; to him 'that Sacrificeth not: as is the good, ſo is the Sinner; 'and he that ſweareth, as he that feareth an Oath. *Eccleſ.* 9. 2. Nay, more than this, 'That there is a 'juſt Man that periſheth in his Righteouſneſs, and a 'wicked Man that prolongeth his Life in his Wick-'edneſs *Eccleſ.* vii. 15.

This Pſalm, of which my Text is part, ſeems to have been written on purpoſe, to anſwer ſuch objections as theſe.

'Fret not thy ſelf, ſays the Royal Prophet, becauſe 'of the Ungodly, *ver.* 1. neither be thou envious againſt 'the Evil-doers; for they ſhall ſoon be cut down like 'the graſs, ſwiftly, and ſuddenly; and be withered even

'as

' as the green Herb, their continuance ſhall not be long. And then he proceeds, by proper Motives, to excite us to Piety; ' Delight thou in the Lord and he ſhall give ' thee thy Hearts deſire. Commit thy way to him, and ' put thy truſt in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs. ' He ſhall make thy Righteouſneſs as clear as the light, ' and the juſt dealing as the Noon-day. What greater Happineſs can there be, than to have our ſulli'd Reputation reſtor'd to its primitive Whiteneſs? And then he proceeds, in ſeveral Inſtances, to diſcover the great Advantages that accrue to the pious and good, and lays open the dangers and perils that are the ſad Attendants on Irreligion and Vice. So that the Words of my Text may appear like a juſt Concluſion fairly drawn from Premiſſes. Since Wickedneſs has ſuch miſchievous Conſequences, therefore Keep Innocency, *&c.*

Which Words are moſt worthy of every Man's Conſideration, ſhould be ſuppos'd to be written in Letters of gold, and be always before our Eyes; and they wou'd make Men Juſt and Honeſt in their Shops and Compting-Houſes; Virtuous and Chaſt in their Bed-Chambers, and Religious and Devout even in a Fleet or Camp; and indeed will be an excellent direction to Men in their whole Life and Converſation, *Keep Innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that ſhall bring a Man Peace at the laſt.*

In Diſcourſing of which words, which I ſhall do with all the plainneſs I am able, as being deſirous rather of making thoſe who hear me more Religious, than more Learned, more good, than more Wiſe, I ſhall (by God's Aſſiſtance)

I. Enquire what *Innocency* is, how we may be ſaid to *keep it*, and if loſt, how it may be regain'd, and ſhew the great Advantages of it.

II. I ſhall in a few words, ſpeak of the Nature of Juſtice and Right, *Take heed unto the thing that is right.*

III. To encourage you to *keep Innocency*, and to *take heed to the thing that is right*, it will make you happy, not

only in bringing Peace, tho' that be a very great and inestimable Blessing, but in bringing Peace at the last.

I. What Innocency is? *&c.*

The Septuagint call it Ἀναιδία, or the doing no Evil, or freedom from Sin, or that happy condition in which all Mankind had been, had it not been, had it not been for the unfortunate Transgression of our first Parents

But it may be ask'd, Where is such Innocency to be found? It is not too nice and delicate a Plant to grow in the rank Soil of Humane Nature? Holy *David*, we know, cry'd out in his sorrowful Address to Almighty God, That *he was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin did his Mother conceive him.* Psal. li. 5. So that there was no Moment in which he was free from it. And St. *Paul* assures us, *That we are by Nature Children of Wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. which we could not be, were we Originally Innocent, and Transgressors only by our Father's Copy. Where then is some one to be found that is perfect in Word and in Deed? I answer, None; but the blessed Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, *who did not disdain the Virgin's Womb*, was ever so; and in whom the God-head and Manhood were so mysteriously united, who spake so as never Man spake, and did what never any but the Lord of Nature cou'd do How then, it may be further ask'd, can we keep that which is not? I answer, by asking another Question, How comes it, that our Blessed Lord, who best knew what was in Man, should bid his Disciples and us, *Be Perfect, as our Father which is in Heaven is Perfect?* St. Matt v. 48. 'Tis impossible, strictly speaking, that Humane Nature should rise up to the Divine Perfections: We are only charg'd as near as we can to approach them, which indeed is the end of the Christian Religion; but more is not requir'd at our Hands. He who takes his aim high, will in all likelyhood arrive nearer to Perfection, than he who only sets mean things before him for his Imitation. To stretch and exert our selves at some-

what

what out of our reach, may ſometimes be convenient, for the trying our Strength, and improving it; and Courage and Induſtry wou'd ſink and be loſt, were they not ſometimes kept up by imaginary Ideas, that have no real Being. Thus in my Text, *Keep Innocency*, i. e. Keep it as far as you are able; as far as is conſiſtent with Humane Frailties; Keep it as much as the Weakneſſes and Imperfections of our deprav'd and corrupt Nature will give us leave.

But tho' Innocence, I mean our Primitive Innocence, be loſt, yet there is a way (praiſed be God) of regaining it. And that is, Firſt by Baptiſm. And that of Adult Perſons is, Secondly, re-obtain'd by Repentance.

Repent and be Baptized every one of you, for the Remiſſion of Sins, ſaid St. *Peter*, in his Sermon to the very murtherers of our Bleſſed Saviour. *Acts* 2. 38. If their Sins were remitted, they were then in the condition of the very Innocents themſelves. The healthful and ſalutary Waters of Baptiſm waſh away Original Guilt, and blot out the Hand-writing of Ordinances againſt us. *Buried with Chriſt in Baptiſm*, ſays St. *Paul*, *wherein you are alſo riſen with him. And you, being dead in your Sins, hath he quicken'd together with him, having forgiven you all Treſpaſſes.* Col. 2. 12, 13. Happy then are we Chriſtians on innumerable accounts, more particularly on this, That we have a a Remedy that will reach as far as the Diſeaſe; and that as in *Adam* all die, even ſo by Chriſt and Baptiſm, all ſhould be made alive again. That the full and compleat Obedience of the laſt *Adam*, did make an ample and ſufficient amends for the diſobedience of the firſt. So that from the time of our Baptiſm, to the time of our committing actual Sin, we are as free from Sin, and are then truly Innocents, as we are called, as if Original Guilt had never been incurr'd. But when we firſt act contrary to our Conſciences, and a Senſe of our duty, when we firſt receive an inward Check, which is that faithful Witneſs that God has

has plac'd in every one; when we forfeit our Innocence, then we are actual Sinners, and then, without Repentance, we incur the divine diſpleaſure. And then

Repentance is that Secondly, by which our Innocency is retriev'd. *Repent and be Converted*, ſaid St. *Peter* to the *Jews*, *that your Sins may be blotted out*: Act. iii. 19. And if our Sins be blotted out, we are in the ſame happy condition in which we were before thoſe Sins were committed. We all know, or ſhould know, That Sins are called Debts in Scripture Language. *Forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*, are our Lord's own Words. And a great reſemblance there is between our Sins and Debts in many particulars; they make us Debtors to the Divine Juſtice; and in other Inſtances they are alike, and amongſt others in this, That I believe ſome mens Sins and Debts are greater and more than they are aware of. To carry on the Metophar, If a Debt be forgiven, the Bond given up or cancell'd, the Debtor then is in the ſame condition, as if the Debt had never been contracted. And ſo it is in our Sins; If, upon our true and hearty Contrition, and godly Sorrow, our merciful Father hath forgiven us, we are then by his Favour as clear from all Sin, as when we were carried in our Infancy from the Bapriſmal Font. Holy *David* declar'd, That *he would waſh his Hands in Innocency, and ſo would compaſs God's Altar*. We are too well acquainted with his Character, to ſuppoſe, That he cou'd be *Innocent* on any other ſcore, but that of Repentance, and of Sins forgiven and forgot. The ſcandalous Affair of *Uriah*, in which there was a baſe Complication of Murther and Adultery, and his Unwarrantable Numbring the People, put a Bar into his Plea of *Innocence*; and his deſiring Almighty God *to waſh him, and he ſhall be whiter than Snow*, Pſal. li. 7. ſuppoſes that he was unclean and impure before. To the ſame purpoſe, God, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, requires thoſe of *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, That they *waſh* and *make themſelves clean*, by *ceaſing to do Evil, and learning to do Well:* Chap. i, ver. 16, 18. And then it is graciouſly pro-

promiſed, that tho' *their Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be white as Snow*, tho' they *be red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool.* From all which it appears, that by the Goodneſs of God, Repentance will ſupply the place even of Innocence it ſelf. And happy is it for us, that God will again receive us into Favour after our multiplied Offences againſt him; or otherwiſe the Condition of Man had been very calamitous indeed, born with a Proneneſs and Diſpoſition to Sin, expos'd to numberleſs Temptations from without, and within carrying a home-bred Traytor ready and willing to betray him; his Caſe would be moſt hard, were there not a way of being reconcil'd to him. But then our Repentance muſt be deep, and hearty, and ſincere, or it will not be effectual. Our Innocence, is true, is loſt by one ſingle Sin, as one Cloud is ſufficient to eclipſe the whole Sun, but 'tis not to be regain'd without long and continual Habits of Repentance: For in the noble Compoſition of a good Chriſtian, the mixture of one Vice or Folly corrupts and depraves the whole. And I ſhall add, That tho' the Wound of Sin be curable by Repentance, yet, ſtill it ever leaves a Scar behind it, to put us in mind that we have been Sinners: And if we fall back to our former Follies, our Pardon will be cancelled, and our former Sins will be brought into our laſt Accompt, with Intereſt. And this muſt be ſaid for the Advantage of our firſt Innocence, not ſully'd by Sin, that that is like a good ſtate of Health, ſound, vigorous, and uninterrupted: But Innocence after Repentance, is like Health after a long fit of Sickneſs; the Man is tender and crazy, and for a long time in continual danger of Relapſes.

And thus we have look'd into the Nature of Innocenſe, and laid down the Methods of recovering it when loſt; it remains, that we ſhew the great Advantages of it. 'Tis a Jewel of the greateſt Value that can be, or rather, that is unvaluable, and Crowns and Sceptres themſelves are not to be compar'd to it. 'Tis

Innocence that makes us eaſie and happy, and fearleſs when ſurrounded with Danger; for Men deſtitute of that Support, which is the only Comfort in Diſtreſs, generally want true Courage, when there is the moſt occaſion for it. 'Tis Innocence that guards us from all Apprehenſions of Spectres and Apparitions, the Creatures often of our own Fancies and Imaginations, for they who are Conſcious of no Guilt, and fear God, have nothing to fear from Devils, or from Men. 'Tis their ſweet Innocence, their Native Simplicity and Tenderneſs, their undiſguis'd Goodneſs and Modeſty, that endears Children, and makes them appear ſo lovely in our Eyes: They have no inward Terror to perplex and ſtartle them, every thing with them is ſmiling and happy. 'Tis Innocence is the true Treaſure indeed, that draws after it no Repentance; 'tis attended with heavenly Peace, the pureſt Joys, refin'd Pleaſures, and at laſt with endleſt Glory. 'Tis Innocency, that has ſomething ſo ſoft and inſinuating, that Envy and Rage have been diſarm'd by it, and a Paſſion more furious than thoſe. 'Tis Innocency that calms our Conſciences, and engages the good Angels on our ſide; *they are Miniſtring Spirits* for the good of the Pious, that *they hurt nor their Foot againſt a Stone*; they aſſiſt and further them in their honeſt Undertakings, and *guard them in all their Ways.* How Honourable, how Happy is it to have thoſe Favourites of Heaven ſo deeply concern'd, and conſtantly vigilant for our Welfare! 'Tis Innocence that gives a Luſtre to Proſperity, and Innocency that makes our Days pleaſant and chearful, and our Nights eaſie, by removing from us frightful and guilty Dreams.

On the other Hand, what wretched Creatures are Men, when forſaken by that heavenly Gueſt? Without Innocency, amidſt the greateſt appearing Pleaſures, there is no full Content, and compleat Satisfaction. Like a wounded Deer, that runs over Fields and Woods, and ſwims over Rivers to aſſuage his pain, but all in vain,

ſince

ſince he cannot ſhake the fatal Arrow from his ſide, *hæret lateri lethalis Arundo*; ſo a Man check'd by a bad Conſcience, can no more fly from the ſmarting Reproaches of it, than he can fly from himſelf. He dares not look up to Heaven, from whence he is rather to expect Vengeance than Favour; he is ſtung in his own Thoughts with the remembrance of his Pride and Folly, and all his Sins in moſt dreadful Order are ſtill flying in his Face. And then ſad Horror and cutting Remorſe importunately purſue him; his guilty Mind ſuggeſts to him, That like *Cain*, *Every one that findeth him will ſlay him, and his Puniſhment is greater than he can bear.* Gen. 4. 13, 14. If he does think of a Future State, and ſometimes he cannot help it, he has then before his Eyes the ſad and melancholy Territories of Darkneſs, Torment and Execution. So that, to conclude this Head, with Submiſſion be it ſpoken, God himſelf cannot give a more perfect Gift in this World, than a clear Conſcience, and a ſpotleſs Innocency to our Lives end.

II. I proceed to my *Second* Particular, which I ſhall diſpatch in a very few Words, that is, to ſpeak to the nature of *Right*. *Take heed unto the thing that is right.*

It appears, we ſee, from the Caution given, That of our ſelves we are not apt to do the thing that is right, tho' we are ſtrict enogh, God knows, in taking care that every one ſhould do right to us. The known Definition of doing right, is to give every one his own, and there cannot be a better Rule, than that golden one, of doing to others, as we deſire others ſhould do to us, and this will take off that Partiality that every Man naturally has for himſelf; it appearing from the Practice of too many, that they look upon themſelves, not as Citizens of the whole World and part of the univerſal Family of Mankind, but born for themſelves alone. This in general is the Deſcription of the Duty we are ſpeaking of, a Duty that ſpreads its ſelf far and wide into all the

* *Suum cuique tribuere.*

Con-

Concerns of this World and another: but to descend to those Particulars, which are very numerous, would be too tedious for the time allotted for this Discourse. Waving therefore them,

III. I proceed to my *Third* and *Last* Particular, and that is, To encourage you to *keep Innocency*, and to take heed to the thing that is right, it will make you Happy, not only in bringing Peace, tho' that be a very great and inestimable Blessing, but it will bring Peace at the last.

And if I may not be thought to refine too much, perhaps I may say, that more may be design'd in bringing Peace, than giving it. We sometimes give that which is extorted by the Clamours and Importunities of the Poor, we relieve our selves in it; and sometimes when the Fit of Charity is over, Men wish again, in their harder Minutes, for what they gave away in their tender ones. But when what we give to the Needy is brought to them, it looks like the Result of Deliberation and gives a new Lustre to the Obligation. But I insist not on it. *Keeping Innocency and taking heed to the thing that is right*, will bring a Man Peace at the last.

And when I have said, It will bring Peace, what have I further to add; Peace with God Peace with Men, and Peace with our selves. * *Peace the best thing that Men were ever yet acquainted with; Peace that is to be preferred to a thousand thousand Triumphs.* *Peace* that was brought by way of Largess at our *Saviour's* Birth: *On Earth, Peace*, a Gift worthy of him who sent it, a Gift, worthy of him who brought it. *Peace*, the last Gift our *Blessed Lord* bequeathed to his Disciples, and surely then he would not have given mean things. *Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you; not as the World giveth give I unto you. St.* John 14. 27. For the Sake of *Peace*, in Expectation only, we submit to the rough and hazardous Methods

* *Pax optima rerum Quas homini novisse datur Pax una triumphis Innumeris melior.*

of

of War, and for the ſake of that we reliſh with Pleaſure thoſe Victories that taſte ſo ſtrong of Blood, ſo dearly bought with the Blood of Thouſands, and the Tears of the Fatherleſs and the Widows.

If then this *Worldly Peace* only be ſo valuable, that we refuſe nothing to obtain it. What ſhall we ſay of that *heavenly Peace, that paſſes all Underſtanding* which neither the *Tongue of Men* or *Angels* can deſcribe; for this alſo ſhall be the happy Conſequence of *keeping our Innocency and taking heed unto the thing that is right, for that ſhall bring us Peace at the laſt.*

But how great a Felicity is it to have it, were it only in this World! when we are deſtitute of all other Earthly Comforts, then to have *Peace of Conſcience*, is the moſt perfect Bleſſing that we can enjoy *in this Life*, and will be a great part of that in the *next*. For when one half of a Man is benum'd with a *Palſie*, or he is burnt up with a *Feaver*, or drown'd with a *Dropſie*, or wrack'd with the *Gout*, or tormented with the *Cholick* or *Stone*, or almoſt Breathleſs with an *Aſthma*; when he is under theſe calamitous Circumſtances, his weeping Friends wringing their Hands about his Bed: Then to have Peace of Mind and a full Aſſurance of the Divine Favour, beyond the *dark Cloud* of Afflictions to ſee ſome refreſhing *Beams of Light*; is not this a Bleſſing not rightly to be valued, and does not this in thoſe ſorrowful Moments relieve a Man, and make him *more than Conqueror*; But if at that time, his Conſcience does not ſpeak Peace to him, how ſad, how lamentable is his Condition, to ſtruggle with the Diſtemper and thoſe terrible Reflections at the ſame time, and alſo to have the worſt of future Expectations. To have good reaſon to believe, that theſe are but the beginnings of ſorrows, to have Hell-fire flaſhing in our Eyes, and to be convinc'd, that we are juſt about to be plung'd into the Bottomleſs-pit, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quencht*: is not *this* a fore-taſt of Hell, and is not this the ſoreſt Evil and the greateſt Curſe in this Life? To have before our Eyes

our

our wretched Company, those damned Spirits; with a Spiritual Eye to see that penal Fire, those everlasting Burnings, those Torments that will never have an End, this is intolerable, and yet this is the sure and certain Wages of Sin.

But to refresh you with a more comfortable Prospect, *He shall have Peace at the last*; Peace also when this World shall be no more. Peace and Rest and Joy in Heaven, a place more full of Delight than we can possibly imagine. A place, in which we shall be free from those anxious Cares to which our Weak and Imperfect Sublunary State is expos'd. A place, in which *all Tears shall be for ever wip'd from our Eyes*, in which there is nothing we can wish for or fear, for we shall have All that our most longing Desire can thirst after, and nothing can approach to hurt us, All things there will be at an end, except our Joy, and *Our Joy no Man taketh from us*. There will be no parching Heat to offend us, no Northwinds to chill our Blood. Envy and Jealousie and all the train of corrupt Passions will be for ever banish'd from that Happy place. The Day *there* will be perpetual. and the Night will never draw her Sable Curtain over them. Mortality is a flaw in all *Earthly Tenures*, but their Title is indisputable and indefeizable. But I must no longer lose my self in a *Theme*, in which it is so easie to speak much, and so impossible to say enough. 'Tis a Collection of all Happinesses, 'tis beyond expression, 'tis beyond imagination. The most exalted Fancy will fall as short in the Description of it, as the very lowest and the meanest.

And thus having dispatch't my *Third* and last particular, I crave leave to apply all, and shall then conclude.

First then, Since Innocency is found to be of so great Value, is it not of the highest concernment to us, that we do all we can, either to preserve it or regain it. In order to this, I address my self, *First* to the Young; to those whose Innocency is the least stain'd and sullid. For tho', as is prov'd before, a perfect and unsinning Innocence

cence is not to be found, yet there is a comparative one, that may pass for such, if plac'd near the Lives of those who are continually offending, And Youth is an unthinking part of Life, or they who enjoy it would not so easily part with their *Innocence*, so soon lost, but recover'd with so much difficulty. 'Tis too often that then they deceive themselves and stifle those Remorses, which give a check to unlawful Desires. They forget that Youth, like some Flowers, is almost as soon decay'd and wither'd as blown; that Old Age continually persues us, and at last will overtake us, when we shall disrelish those things that at present are so gratifying and obliging. That that Age is an Enemy of Pleasures, is a Burthen to it self: That every Sin of our Youth does add a new weight to it, and makes that part of Life uncomfortable and uneasie. And however tempting and engaging Iniquity may seem to the Gay and Frolicksome, and however they may flatter themselves with the hopes of a time of Recollection hereafter, yet it is most certain, that the Pleasures of Sin are not solid and lasting, it gives a terrible Future remorse, and draws after it a long Repentance. Like the Book in *the Revelations*, if *it be sweet as Honey in the Mouth*, Rev. x. 9. like that after Digestion *it will make the Belly bitter*. *Keep* then *your Innocency*, if you can, which is the greatest Treasure in the World; 'tis the noblest Amulet, and best Preservative against the Poison and Infection of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. Endeavour to cultivare your Souls, by adorning them every Day with some new Virtue. Form your tender Minds to the Love of God and Religion, excite strong Desires after Holiness in your Hearts, and a sincere Love of Virtue, and arm them with firm Resolutions of adhering to it.

Secondly, I apply my self to those who are grown up, to those that are farther advanc'd in Years and Folly, to those who have not *kept* their *Innocence*: And I fear this Head will comprehend the greatest, much greatest part of Mankind. To those my most Earnest and Passionate

ſionate Exhortation is, That they endeavour to regain and retrieve it by all Means they poſſibly can.

The Value of it is ineſtimable, they cannot give too much for it. 'Tis like the *Field in the Goſpel*, if a Man gives all he has for it, the Purchaſe of it is not dear, If a Man ſells his Meals, his Sleep, his Recreations and Diverſions, his Body, his Eſtate, his All: If he can attain it, 'tis an eaſie Bargain, he does not pay too much for it. Labour for it as for hidden Treaſures; it will amply Reward your utmoſt Diligence and Labour, when in your Poſſeſſion. and needs muſt it be of the higheſt Value, ſince all Men Centre in the eſteem of it. They who have it, know the unſpeakable Felicities of it; they who have it not, ſome of them would give ten thouſand Worlds, could they command them, that they had it: So that how excellent muſt that be, that none but the moſt profligate can diſregard? On numberleſs accounts it is very valuable; were it ſo on no other, yet this alone would ſufficiently recommend it, that without it there is no Peace.

What Fruit can you promiſe your ſelf from thoſe things, that (generally ſpeaking) create preſent Reluctance? may be fairly ask'd of thoſe who are careleſs of this Jewel For Almighty God has curſt the bitter Tree of Sin, that no good Fruit ſhall grow thereon for ever; and in every Sin in which we forfeit our Innocence, we forfeit our Peace and Happineſs at the ſame time. Thus for inſtance, What is Intemperance in Eating, but a more refin'd way of Poiſoning us? What is Drunkenneſs, but a ſhort Madneſs; Does not Luſt debaſe us to the Nature of Beaſts; And in every deviation from the Will of God, and the Rules of Reaſon rectified, we lay a Foundation for Repentance here, or Eternal Miſery hereafter. Were there to be no future Recompence for Virtue and Innocency, yet the Calmneſs and Serenencſs of Mind that attends 'em here, are very ample Rewards; whereas in Vice there is ſomewhat ſo odious, that Men dare not look into themſelves, and

and *that alone* might deter them from that which brings neither true pleasure, honour nor profit, and always makes a Man uneasie to himself.

Once more, *Thirdly*, I crave leave to make a general Application. If *keeping Innocency, and doing the thing that is right, will bring a man peace at the last*, Why may it not bring Peace to Communities and Nations, if to one, why not to many? And if so, must it not create uneasie reflections in us, that notwithstanding our amazing Success, if any Success can be amazing from themost Accomplish'd General, commanded by the very best of Queens: Notwithstanding this, That the Blesing of Peace (the Wish and Desire of all *Europe*, except of the common Enemy and Oppressor, who delights in prolonging its Miseries,) our more then daily Prayer, *Give Peace in our time, O Lord*, that this Blessing should be so long deny'd us, and that we have not yet obtain'd the request of our Lips and Hearts? For War of it self, even tho' it be successful, during its continuance, is a sore Calamity; and we always pay dear for Victories, that are not to be had without the Blood of our brave Fellow-Subjects; the meanest of whom that falls in the day of Battel, has either a Father that begat him, or a Mother that bore him, or some Relation or Friend to lament and wring their Hands for him. But when War is unsuccessful, and we fly before the Enemy, 'tis then one of the forest Evils, 'tis then rank'd with the Famine and the Plague, as appears from the sad Option that *David* was to make, for his Numbring the People. And this ought always to be dreaded by those who are engag'd in it; more especially, by us who have a Prince to deal with, who has long look'd upon us with a Malicious Eye, for obstructing his ambitious Designs, and what he calls his Glory: As if any solid Glory cou'd be obtain'd by laying whole Countries desolate, and by being lavish of the Blood of his own Subjects, and that of others too. A Prince that has been long permitted by Providence to proceed in the open Violations of Innocence and Right, a Scourge to Mankind, that has both deserv'd and wanted it. What Peace then can be to him, or what Peace made with him, whose whole Life has been a continual Scene of Injustice and Violence, and infamous for the Breaches of the most solemn Publick Treaties, and Edicts? But as God does often burn that Rod, with which he does correct his own Children, so we hope that this great troubler of *Israel*, who like *Sisera*, has so often fought against the Armies of the living God, like him will receive his final Overthrow and Defeat from the Arms of a Brave and Illustrious Woman. And if we proceed with him as we have begun, his Subjects will not complain much longer. *That they groan under the Weight of his Glory.*

But such a compleat Deliverance is not to be expected, till we discard our Sins, and regain our Innocency: And unless this be done, *God will be aveng'd of such a People* as we are; too many of whom have declar'd War, not only against our Enemies, but against Virtue and Religion too, our best Friends. I had much rather be an Orator of our Praises, but I must do Justice and say, That our Sins are great and numerous, and crying, and some of that sort, that the Publick at last, if we grow not wiser, in time must suffer by. Thus, for Instance, by our Quarrels and Misunderstandings among our selves, by our unwise and odious distinctions, our ranging

our

our ſelves into Parties, as it were into Order of Battel; this which is the happieſt of all Governments, has been in danger of ſuch Wounds which the Dexterity and Skill of future Ages will not eaſily cure. But I will not enlarge upon our Diviſions, leſt I unfortunately inflame a Wound I would moſt gladly heal. But what Hand is tender and bold enough for that Employment? So that ſuffer me only to ſay, That it muſt be beyond the common Degrees of Madneſs to quarrel at *this time*, when our Enemies are ſo Powerful and Deſperate, and when an entire Union of Hearts and Affections is ſo neceſſary. What will Poſterity ſay, that ſits in Judgment upon the Memory of thoſe before them? ſurely this, That we did not know on what Ground we ſtood, nor will they ſay, That we were a wiſe and underſtanding People, that would ſuffer our Paſſions and privat Intereſts to interfere with our Duty, and the publick Good. Would a wiſe and good Man hazard any ways a Ship, in which he was embark'd (and we all ſail in the ſame Bottom, and muſt ſink or ſwim together) becauſe every thing in it was not manag'd and order'd, as he would have it? If we in good Earneſt think of theſe things, they will cover us with Confuſion; if we have any Remains of the Love of our Country left, we muſt be wanting in no good Office that may tend to its Preſervation, and Welfare, and Honour.

In order to this, love and obſerve Religion, for nothing is ſo deſirable as the Favour of God and ſo dreadful as his Anger: Whether we ſhall be conſider'd in a publick or private Capacity, there is nothing ſo Beneficial as that. For if we will *amend our Ways* and our Doings, our Hopes will have an ample Field to range in: But if we will not, the Burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* is an Example eternally dreadful, and God can deſtroy thoſe who will not be humbled. Do then all the good you can; keep Innocency as far as you can, for this is the Perfection of humane Nature, and in the beſt Senſe, a *Being like the moſt High*; this will not only bring you Peace here, tho' that will be a great Bleſſing, but will in due time convey you to the Regions of Eternal Peace and Glory. To which Holy and Happy Place may God, in his own time, bring us all, for Jeſus Chriſt's Sake. *Amen.* FINIS.